

A/ 20. The method of claim 12 wherein entering into communication comprises entering into two-way communication with the first network by way of the second network to send and receive information.

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present application, as amended. Claim 5 has been amended to correct a minor deficiency, and new claims 12-20 have been added. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added to the application by the amendment.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Thorne (U.S. Patent No. 6,021,310) in view of Sebestyen (U.S. Patent No. 3,976,995). Applicants respectfully traverse the §103(a) rejection.

Independent claim 1 recites a method of coupling a portable communications device (PCD) to a first network by way of a second network. As recited, the PCD is normally in radio communication with the first network, but is coupled to the first network by way of the second network when the PCD is out of radio communication with the first network. In the method, the PCD is coupled to the second network, and is caused to leave a first network mode and enter a second network mode. A network connection is established with the first network by way of the second network, and communication is entered into with the first network by way of the second network.

As explained in the specification of the present application, the first network is typically a cellular or pager communications network. However, situations arise wherein the PCD is out of range of such pager or cellular communications network. In such an instance, the PCD is coupled to a second network such as a telephone or computer network, and communication is established with the pager or cellular communication network by way of the telephone or computer network.

The Thorne reference discloses a pager having a modem 48 coupled to a cellular receiver 50 and a cellular transmitter 54 for over-air communication with a cellular network. The modem 48 is also coupled to a telephone jack 34 on the pager for communication with a telephone line which is presumably coupled to a telephone network. However, and importantly, the Thorne reference does not disclose or suggest that the telephone network (i.e., the second network) is coupled to the cellular network (i.e., the first network) such that the pager is coupled to the cellular network by way of the telephone network when the pager is out of radio communication with the cellular network, as is required by independent claim 1.

In fact, the Thorne reference is entirely silent with regard to what the pager is communicating with over the telephone network. It may very well be the case that the Thorne pager communicates with a cellular network by way of the cellular receiver 50 and cellular transmitter 54, and also communicates with another network that is **not** the cellular network by way of the telephone jack 34, telephone line, and telephone network. More to the point, and again, the Thorne reference does not provide any disclosure or suggestion that the Thorne telephone network is coupled to the Thorne cellular network such that the Thorne pager is coupled to the Thorne

cellular network by way of the Thorne telephone network, as is required by independent claim 1. As a result, and importantly, the Thorne reference also does not disclose or suggest establishing a network connection with a first network by way of a second network, and entering into communication with the first network by way of the second network, as is required by claim 1.

The Sebestyen reference also discloses a pager. Here, the pager includes an antenna 712 for transmitting for a short distance directly to other pagers, and a telephone link 706 for linking by way of a telephone line to a high power transmitting station. Thus, the Sebestyen pager is not even in radio communication with a first network, as is required by claim 1. Moreover, and like the Thorne reference, the Sebestyen reference does not disclose or suggest establishing a network connection with a first network by way of a second network and entering into communication with the first network by way of the second network, as is required by claim 1. Once again, the Sebestyen reference may very well communicate with a different entity by way of the telephone link 706.

More importantly, since both the Thorne and Sebestyen references fail to disclose or suggest establishing a network connection with a first network by way of a second network and entering into communication with the first network by way of the second network when direct radio communication with the first network is not available, as is required by claim 1, such references cannot be applied to make obvious claim 1 or any claims depending therefrom, including claims 2-11.

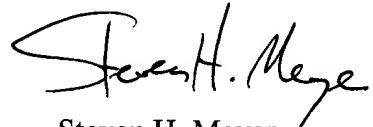
As noted above, Applicants have added new claims 12-20, with new claim 12 being independent. Independent claim 12 is essentially dependent claim 6 in independent form, and thus

recites that the PCD has a serial port and is coupled to the second network by placing the PCD into a cradle having a serial port connector and a network connector so that the serial port of the pager is coupled with the serial port connector of the cradle, and coupling the network connector of the cradle to the second network. Quite simply, both the Thorne and Sebestyen references entirely and wholly fail to suggest or disclose that a pager be placed into a cradle in the manner recited in independent claim 12. Accordingly, such references cannot be applied to make obvious claim 12 or any claims depending therefrom, including claims 13-20.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection as it may be applied to claims 1-20.

In view of the foregoing amendment and discussion, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application including claims 1-20 is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven H. Meyer
Registration No. 37,189

Date: February 20, 2001

WOODCOCK WASHBURN KURTZ
MACKIEWICZ & NORRIS LLP
One Liberty Place - 46th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 568-3100

M:\BellSouth\Apps\Bell0017 (Extending Coverage -- Method)\Bell-0017 Amendment after First Office Action.wpd